PLATES
ILLUSTRATIVE OF
NATURAL HISTORY
PART 5.

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THIRTY PLATES

ILLUSTRATIVE OF

NATURAL HISTORY.

WITH A SHORT DESCRIPTION

ANNEXED TO EACH PLATE.

PUBLISHED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE COMMITTEE OF GENERAL LITERATURE AND EDUCATION,
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PART V.

CONTAINING

ORANG-OUTANG.
TOQUE MONKEY.
WHITE-FRONTED LEMUR.
SHREW.
OTTER.
HOG.
IBEX.
GNU.
BULL.
THREE-TOED SLOTH.
ARMADILLO.
ANT-EATER.
VIRGINIAN OPOSSUM.
DUCK-BILLED PLATYPUS.
GREAT SNOWY OWL.
GOLDFINCH.
KINGFISHER.
ALEXANDRINE PARRAKEET.
PHEASANT.
HEN.
BLACK GROUSE.
GREAT BUSTARD.
GOLDEN PLOVER.
LAPWING.
BITTERN.
BLACK-BACKED GULL.
SLOW-WORM.
TURBOT.
CUTTLE-FISH.
SCORPION.—LOCUST.

LONDON:

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1850.

THE ORANG-OUTANG.——*Pithecus Satyrus.*

The Orang-outang, which is a Malay phrase meaning "wild man," is of the order called *Quadrumana*—a Latin word signifying four-handed. At first sight the form of this animal is very like that of a man. But to those persons who observe closely, the difference is very striking; this difference is more clearly seen in the skeleton than in the living creature. It is then evident how much the forehead wants height and breadth. The arms are so long that the hands of the erect figure reach the ankle-joints; the feet, or rather lower arms, turn inwards, each having a thumb opposed to the fingers. There are other marks of difference, though we will mention only one more. Man has the upright posture, which the ancient Greek word,* describing our race, so well portrays, and which should serve to remind reasoning beings of their immortal state, and of the heavens to which they are instructed to look. Milton has not failed to notice this distinguishing attitude of man. He describes, among

> ——————"all kind
> Of living creatures, new to sight, and strange,
> Two of far nobler shape, erect and tall,
> Godlike erect, with native honour clad," &c.†

Poets, and philosophical writers, among the heathen, have also drawn useful lessons from the superior form of man.

The Orang-outang seldom walks on two legs, except when it has to carry anything in its fore-hands; and if it tries to take an erect position, it requires help, as from a branch of a tree; and in walking supports itself on its fore-arms, with its head bent downwards, and swinging itself forward, as a lame man does on crutches. In the woods of Borneo, Sumatra, and other Indian islands where these creatures are found, they run and jump, and drop from bough to bough with a freedom and ease of which those who see them only in a state of captivity can scarcely form an idea. The height of one brought from Java, and exhibited at Exeter Change between 1817 and 1819, was two feet seven inches; the hair of a brownish red colour. Dr. Abel, who brought him to England, had great difficulty at first in keeping him in order on board ship, but, on gaining his liberty, he became a favourite with the sailors. He died in 1819.

* Ἄνθρωπος, a compound word, signifying, "looking upwards."

† Paradise Lost, Book IV.

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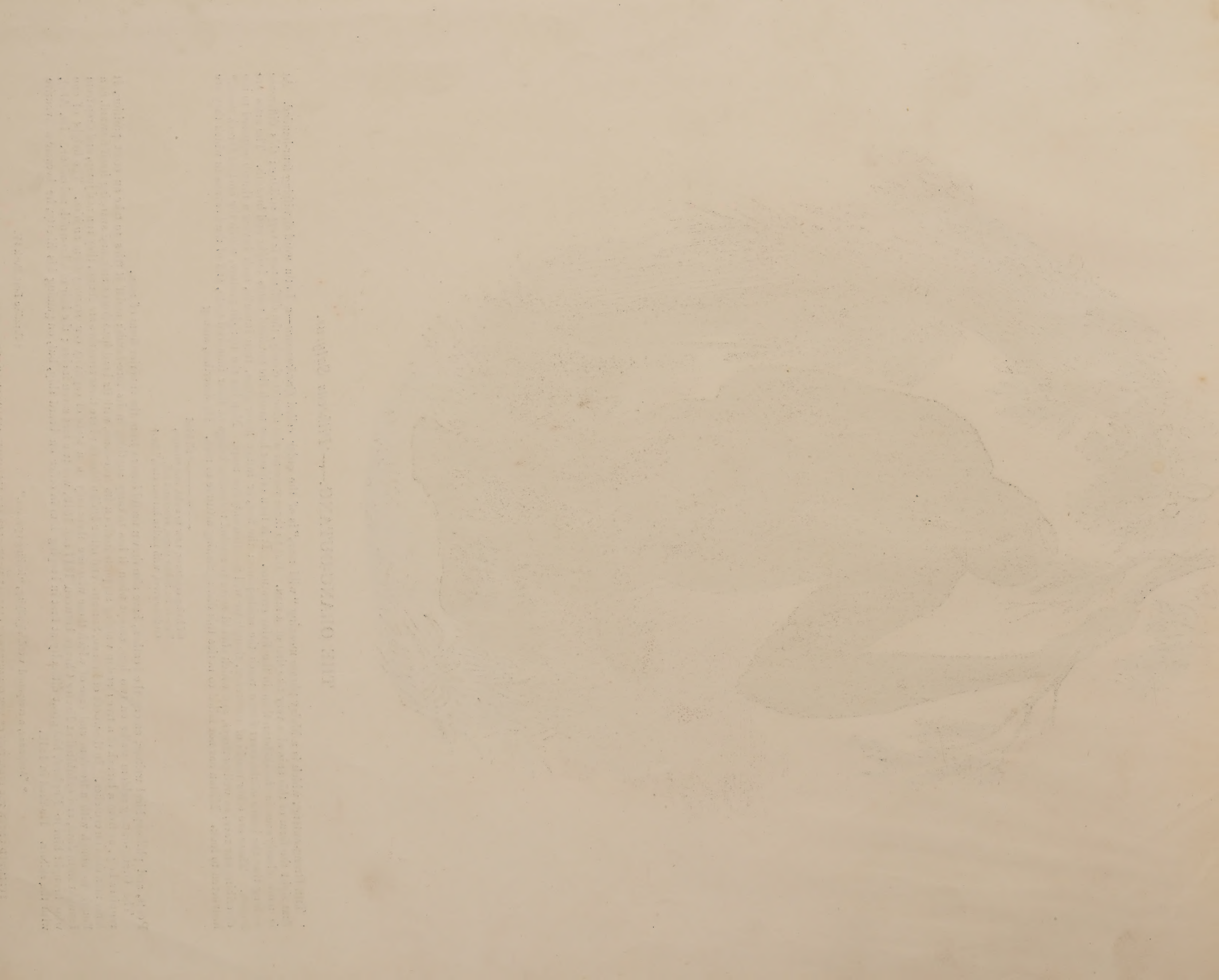

THE MONKEY.

THE TOQUE.——*Macacus Radiatus.*

Monkeys are classed as Quadrupeds; they are also distinguished as *Quadrumanous,* or Four-handed, from their generally possessing four long and flexible hands, with fingers and thumbs. These hands are chiefly formed for grasping; and as the animals possessing them live generally in forests, which not only supply them with food, but defend them from the scorching heat of a tropical sun, the object of their peculiar formation need not be dwelt upon. It is enough to state that monkeys are the most expert of climbers; the visiters to our zoological collections being at once struck with the amazing leaps and swings of these animals, and the perfect ease and agility of all their movements.

Their native countries are the warm parts of Africa, India, and America. Their food is chiefly vegetable; the forests affording them fruit and nuts, roots and shrubs. Insects are easily caught by them, and rapidly devoured. The honey of wild bees, and the eggs, as well as the young of birds, sometimes furnish them with a repast. The accounts, however, which have been given by some writers, of the fondness of the Monkey for animal food in general, appears to be erroneous.

The Toque, a print of which is prefixed, is an inhabitant of India, in the southern regions of which large troops of this species may be found among the woods. They are also said to live in populous towns, whence they carry off fruit and grain with great coolness and address. Numbers of these animals are kept with superstitious care in the Hindoo temples, and are very jealous of the approach of any fresh comers of other species, driving them away with the utmost fury. Among the ancient Egyptians, Monkeys were held in great reverence. Like the sacred Ibis, they were represented in Egyptian sculpture, and their bodies were preserved as mummies. In the narrative given us of the possessions of King Solomon, it is recorded that he had at sea a navy of Tharshish, which came once every three years, bringing gold and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks.*

* 1 Kings x. 22. 2 Chron. ix. 21.

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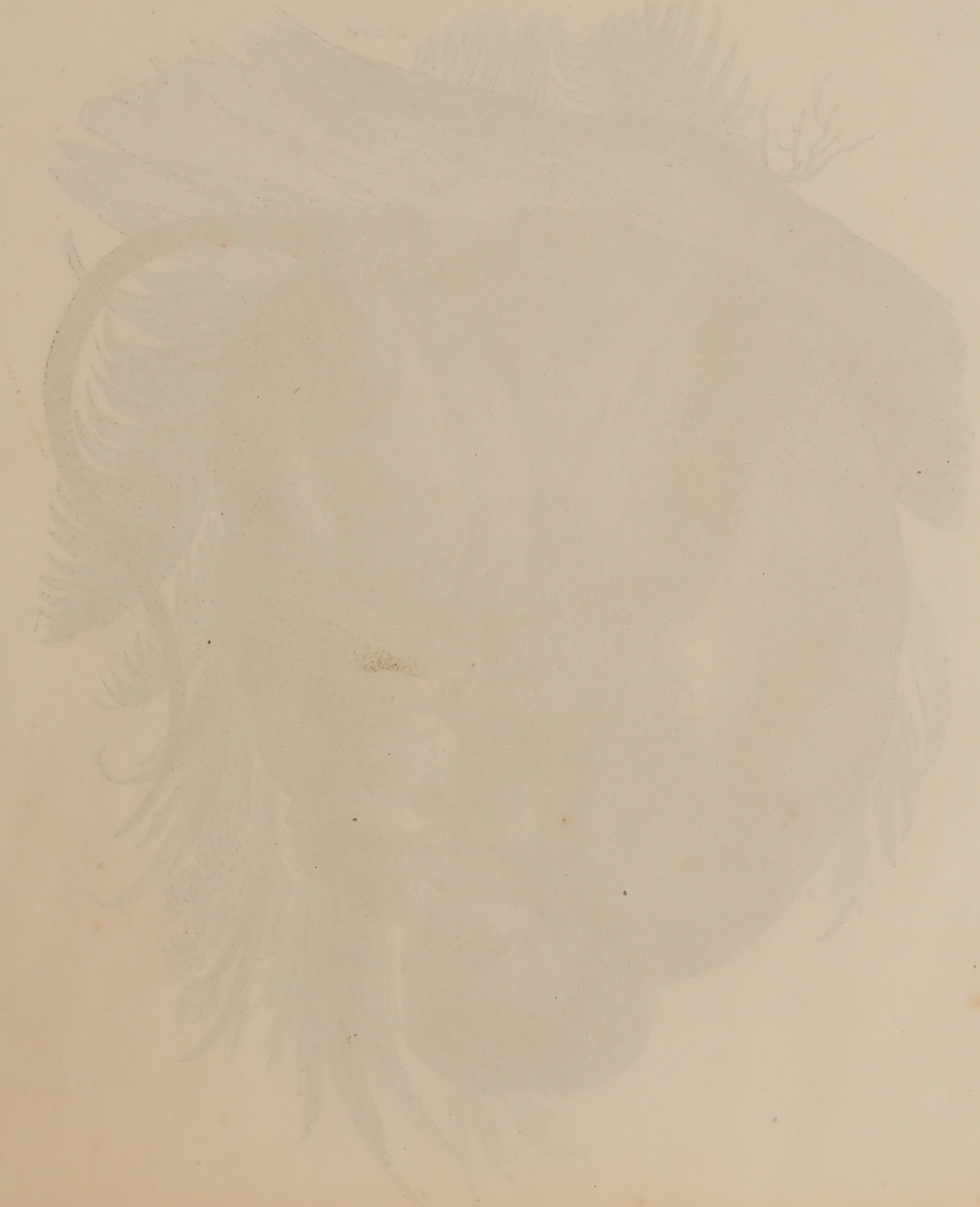

THE WHITE-FRONTED LEMUR.——*Lemur albifrons.*

The Latin word Lemur signifies a spectre; and it appears that Linnæus adopted this term for the singular animal before us, in allusion to its nocturnal habits, as well as its noiseless sweeping movements. It is *quadrumanous*, or four-handed, like the monkey, and has much of the lightness and agility of that creature; but a comparison of the skull of the monkey with that of the Lemur will show a very marked distinction; the former bearing a far greater resemblance to the human skull. There are many species of the Lemur, all being natives of Madagascar, and inhabitants of the woods, among the trees of which they pursue their gambols. They sleep in their hiding-places during the day, but, coming forth in troops after sunset,

"Revisit thus the glimpses of the moon,
Making night hideous."

Their usual voice is a low suppressed grunt, which often breaks forth into a sudden roar. They feed on fruits, insects, reptiles, small birds, and eggs. Pleasing accounts are given of the animals of this kind which have been in this country in a state of captivity. Though less intelligent than monkeys in general, they are more gentle and confiding. They will put their heads to the bars of their cage to have them scratched and rubbed, and by their actions invite notice. When presented with food, they usually take it with their hands; but they sometimes feed on soft bread without holding it. They lap fluid like a dog. The White-fronted Lemur is affectionate and lively. It leaps with amazing swiftness and elegance, with its tail elevated; and after a spring of many yards, pitches so lightly on its fingers, as scarcely to be heard.

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THE SHREW.——*Sorex Araneus.*

The common Shrew is of the *insectivorous* order; that is, of the class of animals whose nature it is to devour the multitudes of insects, which, if not destroyed, would spoil vegetation and render fruitless the labours of man. The animal before us, though common in this country, is so small and shy, that it generally escapes notice. It has a shrill, but feeble cry, which may sometimes be heard, when the Shrew itself is unseen. In the evening, when the labourer has left the field or the garden, this active little creature sallies forth from the hedgerow, or the tufted bank, and begins its attack on the slugs and worms, and such creeping things as it can find. Its long pointed snout enables it to grub among the closest herbage, or under the soft loose soil. In this busy task it is assisted by its soft velvety coat, and supple frame, as well as by its feet, which are curiously formed for running. Though cautious and timid in the presence of man, it is fierce and violent when in pursuit of its prey; and it is always disposed to fight with those of its own species. Professor Bell informs us, that if two Shrews be confined in a box, the weaker soon becomes the victim, and is partly devoured. The common Shrew is of a reddish mouse-colour, paler beneath. The length of the head and body is two inches seven lines; of the tail, one inch ten lines. Its great enemies are moles, weasels, cats, and owls. Mr. Bell mentions a field at Waltham Abbey, which had been abundantly inhabited by Shrews, but in which scarcely one had afterwards appeared, a colony of moles having come to occupy the district. Pennant says, that "cats will kill but not eat the common Shrew." This dislike of the flesh of the Shrew is supposed to arise from its musky smell, which is distasteful to the cat. It is common in the autumn to find numbers of Shrews lying dead in the fields and hedgerows, without any apparent bruise or wound. This mortality has been noticed by naturalists, but the cause does not appear to be understood.

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THE OTTER.——*Lutra vulgaris.*

The common Otter is found along the shores of European rivers, and is not uncommon in this country. Its body is long and low; its tail, which is flat and broad, forms an excellent rudder, and is more than half the length of the head and body; its legs are short; its toes are connected by a complete web; its skin is protected by a fur of two very different kinds; the shorter hair being soft and fine, the longer coarse, hard, and shiny; its teeth are strong and sharp, enabling it to seize and hold the fish on which it chiefly feeds. The fur is much prized. The havoc which it makes among fish, is the chief offence of the Otter. It frequents rivers, lakes, and ponds, in order to take its prey; and sometimes descends to the sea. From its mischievous voracity, it has received this bad character from honest Izaak Walton: "The Otter devours much fish, and kills and spoils much more than he eats." "Fishes," says Mr. Couch, "seem to have an instinctive dread of the Otter: for I am credibly informed that it has been seen to collect into a shoal a vast number of trouts in a river, and to drive them before it, until the greater part have thrown themselves on the shore."

Otter hunting was formerly pursued in this country as a favourite sport, and was attended by many circumstances of cruelty. An account is given of a hunting party in Essex in the year 1796, who killed nine Otters in one day.

The Otter may be tamed, and even taught to catch and bring home fish for its master. "I pray, sir, save me one," says Izaak Walton, "and I'll try if I can make her tame, as I know an ingenious gentleman in Leicestershire, Mr. Nich^{s}. Seagrave, has done; who hath not only made her tame, but to catch fish, and do many other things of much pleasure." Bishop Heber, in his Journal of a Residence in India, tells us that he saw on the banks of the river Mattacolly, a row of nine or ten large and beautiful Otters, tethered with straw collars and long strings to bamboo stakes. Some were swimming about at the full extent of their strings, or lying half in and half out of the water. Others were rolling themselves in the sun, on the sandy bank, uttering a shrill whistling noise, as if in play. "I was told," says the Bishop, "that most of the fishermen in this neighbourhood kept one or more of these animals, which were almost as tame as dogs, and of great use in fishing; sometimes driving the shoals into the nets, sometimes bringing out the larger fish with their teeth. I was much pleased and interested with the sight. It has always been a fancy of mine that the poor creatures whom we waste and persecute to death, for no cause but the gratification of our cruelty, might by reasonable treatment be made the sources of abundant amusement and advantage to us." Professor Bell, who quotes this passage, adds: "This interesting account justifies the conclusion drawn by the good Prelate from the scene that so much delighted him, that 'the simple Hindoo shows here a better taste and judgment than half the otter-hunting and badger-hunting gentry of England.'"

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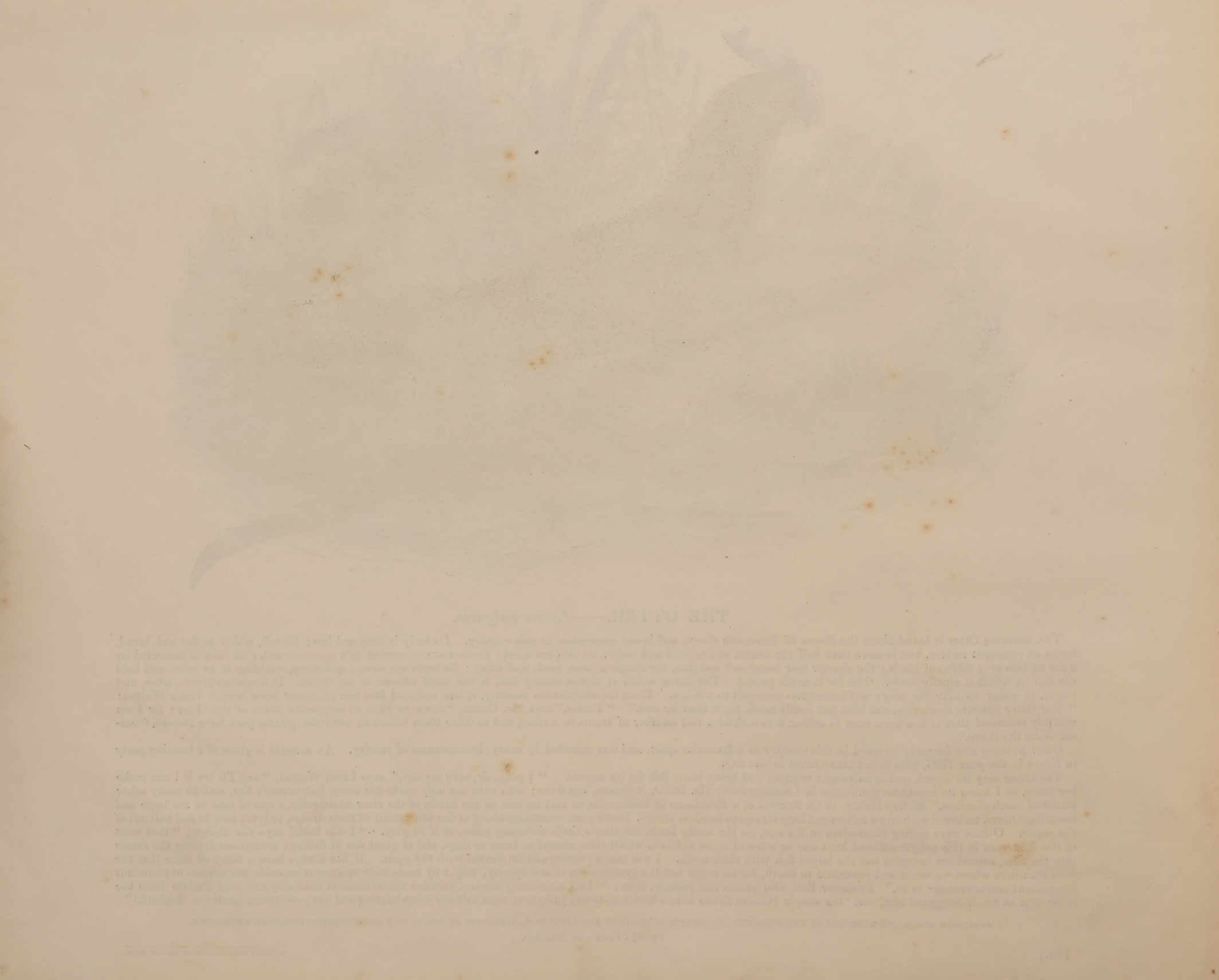

THE IBEX.——*Capra Ibex.*

The Ibex, Bouquetin, or Steinbok, is a bold and active animal, inhabiting the Alps, the Apennines, the Pyrenees, and the mountains of the Tyrol. It is also found in some of the mountainous districts of Asia. It has large knotty horns, curving backwards over the body. These are sometimes three feet long in the male. It has a small head, full eyes, and rough hair; the hair being in the summer short and close, in the winter long and thick. The colour is a light greyish brown; and the male has a dusky beard. It stands about two feet six inches high. The chase of this animal is attended with difficulty and danger. Like the chamois, it will lead the huntsman to steep and rugged spots on the mountains, and when hard pressed, will endeavour to drive him over the rocks. Wary in its habits, it comes down in the night for its simple food in the field or wood, and returns at sunrise to its bleak snow-covered heights. The usual sound which it makes is a short whistle; and when alarmed or enraged it utters a snorting noise. The wild goats alluded to in certain passages of Scripture are supposed to have been of this species. The word Ibex is used in the Latin Vulgate translation for the animal mentioned in 1 Sam. xxiv. 2, and Job xxxix. 1. This is one of the beasts which might be eaten by the children of Israel. The chamois is spoken of in the same verse.*

* Deut. xiv. 5.

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THE GNU.——*Catoblepas Gnu.*

This remarkable animal is generally classed among the antelope kind; but a naturalist, who has had good opportunities of observing it at the Cape of Good Hope, considered the Gnu a graceful link between the buffalo and the antelope. It inhabits the plains of Central and Southern Africa, and is found in company with the zebra, the quagga, and the ostrich. Different travellers describe it as resembling in form the horse, the ox, and the stag. It is about four or five feet in height, and between five and six feet in length. Its legs are slender, in proportion to its heavy looking body, and seems scarcely capable of the amazing speed with which it moves.

Mr. Pringle says, of the Gnu: "Among other peculiarities I observed, that, like the buffalo, or the ox, he is strangely affected by the sight of scarlet; and it was one of our amusements, when approaching these animals, to hoist a red handkerchief on a pole, and to observe them caper about, lashing their flanks with their long tails, and tearing up the ground with their hoofs, as if they were violently excited, and ready to rush down upon us; and then, all at once, when we were about to fire upon them, to see them bound away, and again go prancing round us at a safer distance. On one occasion, a young one, apparently only a week or two old, whose mother had been shot, followed the huntsman home; and I attempted to rear it on cows' milk. In a few days it appeared quite as tame as a common calf, and seemed to be thriving; but afterwards, from some unknown cause, it sickened and died. I heard of instances, in that part of the colony, where the Gnu, thus caught young, had been reared with the domestic cattle, and had become so tame as to go regularly out to pasture with the herds, without exhibiting any inclination to resume its natural freedom."

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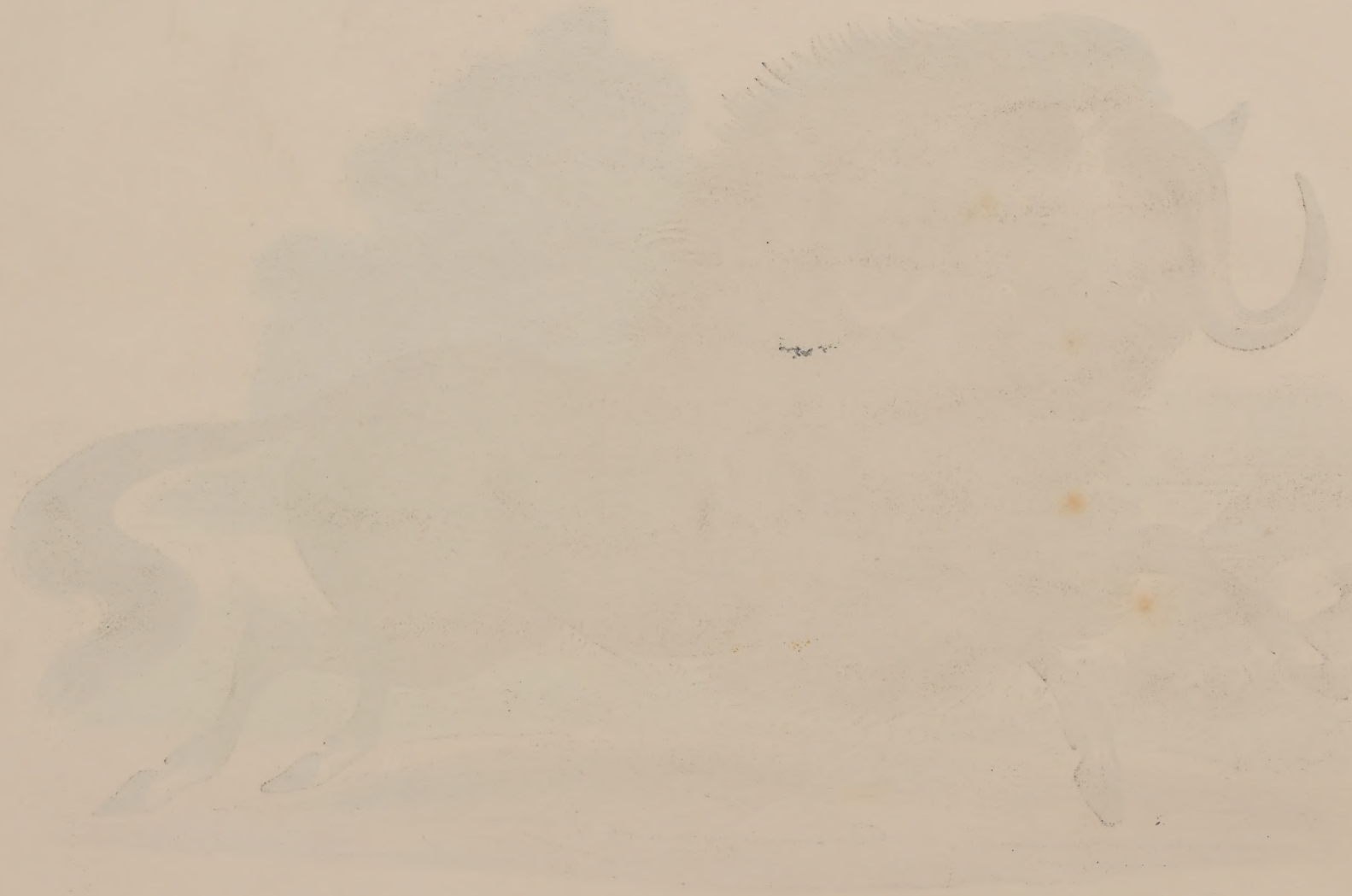

THE BULL.——*Bos Taurus.*

There are many varieties or races of this animal, differing from one another not only according to the nature of the climate and district in which they are bred, but also, according to the objects for which they are intended by their owners. There are the long-horned, the middle-horned, the short-horned, the Welsh breed, the Devon kind, the Suffolk Duns, the Highland or Kyloe breed, the Lowland, the Alderney, the Chillingham wild cattle, &c. In stature the Bull equals the horse; but he is of a much stronger make, particularly about the neck and head. In Professor Bell's History of British Quadrupeds, is a striking representation of the North Devon Bull. The author says: "The Ox of this noble breed may be considered as the very perfection of the working type of this animal. It is characterised by extraordinary docility and good temper, combined with great strength and perseverance in the performance of its labour, and a degree of activity possessed by no other breed. Four good Devonshire Oxen, it is said, will do as much work as three horses; and in returning with empty waggons in harvest, they will trot along six miles an hour."

But though useful and peaceable when unmolested, and carefully treated, the Bull is a formidable creature when ill-used; his horns are thick and large; and when enraged he gores and tosses with fury: and few animals have been more tormented than this.

The excessive fondness of the Spaniards for bull-fighting, (originally, it is supposed, a Moorish practice,) is a remarkable feature in their manners; but it is so hostile to the feelings of our countrymen, that we can have no reason to apprehend any approach to such a custom, nor any return to those brutalizing sports which once disgraced this land. For it must be acknowledged that in Britain such disgraceful barbarities were formerly practised. Bull-baiting was patronized by Royalty, and these dreadful shows were even attended by English ladies. Queen Elizabeth, soon after her accession to the throne, gave a splendid dinner to the French ambassadors, who afterwards were entertained by the baiting of Bulls and Bears; the Queen herself standing with the ambassadors, and looking at the pastime till six at night. It was repeated on the following day. And at a subsequent period she received the Danish ambassador at Greenwich, who was treated with the sight of a Bear and Bull-baiting, "tempered," says Hollinshed, "with other merry disports."

Paul Hentzner, a German, who travelled in England in 1598, describing one of these performances, speaks of the Bulls and Bears having been "worried by great English bull-dogs; but not without risk to the dogs, from the horns of the one, and the teeth of the other; and it sometimes happens they are killed on the spot. Fresh ones are immediately supplied in the places of those that are wounded and tired."

The first mention of the Bull in Scripture is in Gen. xxxii. 15, where we read, that among the presents which Jacob took to pacify his brother Esau, were ten Bulls. Allusion is also made to this animal in the Psalms, the Prophets, and the Epistle to the Hebrews.*

* Psalm xxii. 12; l. 13.; Isaiah xxxiv. 7; li. 20; Jer. l. 11; lii. 20; Heb. ix. 13; x. 4.

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THE THREE-TOED SLOTH.——*Bradypus Tridactylus.*

If this creature deserved its name, we should draw a lesson from it for the use of our young readers, and advise them to shun all idle and slothful ways, as causes of trouble and disgrace. We might well call attention to the account given by the wise king, of the slothful man; * and to the exhortation of the Apostle to the duty of industry.†

But though, at first sight and in some situations, the harmless animal before us may appear to be dull and sluggish, even when in health and strength, a full inquiry into its habits will show that it can enjoy life as much as most other creatures do, and that it affords one among the many living proofs of "The Wisdom of God manifested in the Works of the Creation."‡ The fact is, the sloth is framed for living among trees, in the manner in which it is seen in the above cut; and those writers who describe the creature as slothful and heavy, have probably seen it only on the ground, and, therefore, viewed it in a posture which is painful. The fore-legs are nearly twice as long as the hind; the foot cannot be placed on the ground so as to rest on the sole, but on the edge; and the toes are armed with large claws, long, sharp, and constantly bent inwards. The animal is, therefore, no more adapted for running upon the branches of trees than it is for walking on the earth. It runs along the branches, and under them.

Mr. Waterton, the naturalist, has taken much trouble, first in noticing, and then portraying, the life of the sloth, which is told in a few words: "He moves suspended from the branch, he rests suspended from the branch, and he sleeps suspended from the branch." His most active time is when the wind rises and brings together the branches of neighbouring trees; "Then the sloth seizes hold of them, and pursues his journey in safety. He travels at a good round pace; and were you to see him, as I have done, passing from tree to tree, you would never think of calling him a sloth."§ As he is a great fruit-eater, he is then probably seeking his meal; he also eats leaves. The fore-foot is used to convey food to his mouth. His fur has so much the hue of the moss with which the trees in his native forests in South America are covered, that it is difficult to perceive him when he is at rest. The hair is thick and coarse at the surface, but gradually tapers to the root, where it becomes extremely fine. The three-toed sloth is about the size of a common cat: it is exceedingly tenacious of life. The flesh is esteemed good food by the Indians. It is sometimes called the *Ai*, in consequence of its plaintive cry, resembling that word.

* Prov. xxiv. 30—34. † Rom. xii. 11. ‡ The title of John Ray's great work. § Waterton's "Wanderings."

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THE ARMADILLO.——*Dasypus, Encoubert.*

THERE are several kinds of Armadillo: one kind has four toes on each foot; another five: one has twenty-eight teeth; another (*Dasypus gigas*), has ninety-six. Even the giant armadillo, however, is but a pigmy, compared with some species which have been found in a fossil state, and which are now extinct. The general appearance and habits of the Armadillo may be thus described. Its body is covered with a suit of horny armour. This armour, which is set like mosaic work, is formed of various plates; the pattern of each plate differing in the different species. The limbs are short and thick; the claws large, sharp, and very strong. The head is flat, and broad between the eyes; the ears raised, of a moderate size; the tongue smooth and slender. The armour protects this creature from many dangers to which it is exposed. It never bites, even when attacked; and has only its claws and armour to keep it from dogs and other fierce animals.

One kind of armadillo, the *Mataco*, can roll itself up, head and legs included, into a ball. This is a valuable talent indeed for the Mataco, as it does not burrow in the earth as other species of armadillo do. "The dog," says Mr. Darwin, "not being able to take the whole into its mouth, tries to bite one side, and the ball slips away. The smooth hard covering of the Mataco offers a better defence than the sharp points of the hedgehog."

The specimen before us, the *Poyou*, or weasel-headed armadillo, measures about sixteen inches along the head and body: the tail is six or seven inches long. This creature is so active and strong, that few men can overtake it in running. Like almost all the others of its race, it burrows in the ground. When alarmed it stands still for a moment, then pricks up its ears, and endeavours to gain its burrow; but if this be too distant, it will begin to make a new one. This it does with great rapidity, particularly in a soft soil. The hunter finds much difficulty in removing it from its hole; the creature sometimes leaving its tail in his hand. The flesh is considered a great delicacy by the native Indians, and by the Portuguese and Spaniards of South America, who generally roast the armadillo whole in its shell. But Mr. Waterton says that the flavour is strong and rank. The animal feeds on vegetables, worms, reptiles, insects; and will also eat the flesh of such carcases of animals as it may find on the vast plains of South America, of which it is a native. Many of our readers must have seen in the enclosures in the gardens of the Zoological Society, some small armadilloes running about, free from fear, and familiar even with strangers. Moving here and there in a bustling and hurried manner, they turn up the turf with their noses, as if in search of worms or insects. Their food in this country is generally bread and milk. Like many other wonderful works of the Creator, they afford, in their tame and captive state, many curious proofs of the purposes for which they were so marvellously framed by His Almighty hand.

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THE ANT-EATER, OR ANT-BEAR.——*Myrmecophaga jubata.*

This animal has a narrow head, a small mouth, and a long tongue. The tongue, by means of which the creature secures its food, is, when unemployed, doubled up in its mouth. It is a shy and timid animal; but when hungry, it issues from its retreat of dry and withered leaves, and prowls in search of an ant-hill. Its limbs are short, but thick and strong, and well adapted for attacking the dwellings of the Termites, or white ants, on which it chiefly feeds. On seeing its prey, it stretches out its tongue, which is covered with a gummy fluid, and having collected a number of insects, draws them into its mouth. This process is repeated, the tongue moving to and fro with amazing rapidity, until a sufficient meal has been obtained. The Ant-eater is careful to avoid its powerful enemies, and never provokes a combat; but when assailed by other quadrupeds, it will defend itself with its formidable claws, with much spirit and vigour.

It runs with a peculiar trot, and when chased, will keep a horse in a canter. Sir Robert Schomburgk, who has closely observed the habits of these animals, kept one in a tame state, and found it a good climber. It would take up different things with its claws. It ate beef, and pieces of fish cut small. When not asleep, it generally rested on its haunches. Its height was three feet: the length of the head, one foot three inches; of the back, three feet seven inches; of the tail, three feet six inches.

The Ant-eater is a native of Brazil, Guiana, and Paraguay. The prevailing colour is brown, mixed with black and silvery grey. The tail is long and large. The flesh, though rank and unpleasant to Europeans, is said to be esteemed a delicacy by the Indians.

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THE VIRGINIAN OPOSSUM.——*Didelphis Virginiana.*

This remarkable animal is one of the order called *Marsupialia; Marsupium* being the Latin word for a pouch, or purse. Indeed, the peculiarity of this genus consists in a pouch or bag, in which the female protects her young. In this they remain from the time of their birth until they begin to see; when they occasionally venture from their hiding-place, returning to it on the least appearance of danger. Nor do they finally quit their anxious parent until they have reached a considerable size. The Virginian Opossum is common in many parts of North America. It is one of the largest and finest of its race, and is about the size of a cat; of a grey hue; the fur thick and soft; the mouth wide, the eyes small, the nose sharp and long. It rests during the day on the branches and in the hollows of trees, and prowls about at night, feeding on small animals, vegetables, and fruits. It is also known to rob the poultry-house; but it hastens away at the first appearance of dawn. It suffers in its turn from the attacks of birds and beasts of prey, and is also hunted by man, for the sake of its flesh and fat. We are informed that as soon as the Opossum discovers the approach of its enemies, it lies perfectly close to the branch, or places itself snugly in the angle where two boughs separate from each other. The dogs, however, by their power of scent, detect its presence, and stand barking till the hunter, ascending the tree, violently shakes the branch to which the animal is clinging till it is obliged to quit its hold. It has the wonderful art of pretending to be dead. Gathering itself up into a small compass, it assumes all the stillness, as well as the motionless attitude of death. This ingenious trick, aided by the darkness of night, and the disagreeable smell which is natural to the creature, often proves successful. The researches of naturalists in Australia have made us acquainted with many species of marsupial animals which were before unknown.

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THE DUCK-BILLED PLATYPUS.——*Ornithorynchus Paradoxus.*

This very curious animal appears to be partly quadruped, and partly bird, and is, on account of its singular form, called a paradox in nature. It is a native of Australia, and has not been discovered many years. It has a beak like a duck's engrafted on a quadruped's head, which is similar to that of an otter, though much smaller; the usual length of the head and body of the *Ornithorynchus*, including its tail, being about twenty inches. It is covered with a very thick, soft fur, of a dark brown above, and pale beneath. The tail is flat and furry, and gradually lessens to the tip. The legs are very short. A broad tough web covers the fore feet, and extends beyond the claws. These are five in number on each foot, and are straight and strong, suited for hollowing out burrows, which the creature digs for itself near a lake or river. It lives chiefly in the water, and is supposed to feed on water weeds, worms, insects, &c., which it finds in the mud. The hind feet are smaller and less powerful than the front feet, and the web is not carried out beyond the claws of the hind feet. The animal has no teeth; but on the edges of the beak, attached to the gum, are fibres serving the purpose of teeth. The tongue is short and thick. The eyes are small but bright, and, like those of the mole, are much hidden by the fur. It dresses its fur, and seems to delight in keeping it smooth and clean. It has been clearly proved by Professor Owen, that the *Ornithorynchus* suckles its young. The young ones sleep in various postures, sometimes lying at full length, and often rolled up like a hedge-hog in the form of a ball. Mr. Bennett, who procured several of these animals in Australia, gives a pleasing account of their gambols in a cage in which he kept them. "One evening both the animals came out about dusk, and went as usual, and ate from the saucers, and then commenced playing with one another, like two puppies, attacking with their mandibles, and raising their fore-paws against each other. In the struggle one would get thrust down; and at the moment when the spectator would expect it to rise again, and renew the combat, it would begin scratching itself, its antagonist looking on, and waiting for the sport to be renewed."

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GREAT SNOWY OWL.——*Noctua Nyctea.*

This is called the Snowy Owl from the whiteness of its feathers. There are upwards of sixty species, known by the general name of Owls, and the Snowy Owl is the most beautiful of all the birds of this family. The barn-owl, and most other species of Owls, come forth only in the evening, or at night, to seek their food. Their large staring eyes cannot bear the light of day; but they are quick, as soon as twilight comes on, to perceive among the grass or heath the little field-mice, and the various other objects on which they feed. Some Owls fly abroad in the day-time, as well as in the twilight: and this is the habit of the fine bird, the likeness of which is given above. It inhabits the Arctic regions, and other places in which it would suffer much from the severe cold, were it not for its thick soft coat of snow-white feathers. It is also seen in the United States of America, in Greenland, and the islands of Orkney and Shetland. How kind and merciful is the Creator to give this creature the means of bearing the sharp frost and nipping winds to which it is exposed!

Being quite white, with the exception of some dots and streaks of a dull brown, it is scarcely distinguished from the snow, as it glides quickly but silently above the plains. We are told by a naturalist, that it is not at all liked by the sportsman, whom it will follow about for a whole day, perching itself on the highest trees out of danger, and then pouncing down when a bird has been shot, to carry off the prize before the sportsman can reach it. Another writer says, that the bird may be seen moving slowly above shallow rivers, or sitting on a rock raised a little above the water, watching for fish, which it seizes with its long black claws, seldom missing its aim. Its voice is so dismal, that, as Pennant observes, it adds horror even to a Greenland winter.

As the smaller species of Owls hunt for mice and such small prey, this searches for hares and rabbits, grouse, partridges, &c. Its weight is generally from three to four pounds. The length of wing, and strength of the quill feathers on this bird, enable it to fly with more swiftness, and to remain in the air for a longer time, than any other kind of Owl is able to do.

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THE GOLDFINCH.——*Carduelis Communis.*

This is one of the most beautiful of British birds, and is also one of the most docile and agreeable. The species is common, but not so abundant as many others of "the Finches." The Latin name, *Carduelis*, is given to this bird from its fondness for the seed of the thistle (*Carduus.*) It is found generally in the British islands, and is less plentiful towards the north, where wood and cover become scarce. It loves to frequent gardens and the shrubbery, often placing its nest on a fruit-tree, and near some place in which cheerful work is going on. But in the winter, parties of fifteen or twenty of these little birds may be met with on commons or pasture fields, where thistles, ragweed, and similar plants, have flourished, and on the seeds of which they feed. It is on such spots that the Goldfinch is taken by bird-catchers in trap cages, or with limed twigs, a call-bird being used to lure it to its prison.

It is soon reconciled to its loss of freedom, and being intelligent and obedient, as well as musical, amuses its master not only by its song, but often by its entertaining ways. If kindly treated, it loses all fear, and may be taught to draw up its food in small buckets. Goldfinches have even been trained to go through a kind of play, and, after feigning themselves dead, to jump up again at the proper time; though this sort of training must, we fear, be attended with cruelty. There is quite enough of what is curious for us to examine and admire, in the nature and habits of animals, without working on their fears or memories in order that we may laugh at their mimic representations. This remark is true of the Architecture of Birds.

"Behold a bird's nest!
Mark it well, within, without.
No tool had he that wrought, no knife to cut,
No nail to fix, no bodkin to insert,
No glue to join: his little beak was all.
And yet how neatly finished! What nice hand,
With every implement and means of art,
Could compass such another?"

Some small birds, including the Goldfinch, have been styled *felt-making birds;* the texture of their nests being similar to that of a hat, or a piece of double-milled woollen cloth. Birds will, in general, take such building materials as they can most easily procure. A naturalist informs us that he noticed a pair of Goldfinches beginning to make their nest in his garden, forming the groundwork of moss, grass, &c., but on his scattering wool near them, they left off their own stuff, and used the wool. He then gave them cotton, which they preferred to the wool. "The third day," he says, "I supplied them with fine down, on which they forsook both the other, and finished their work with this last article."*

* Architecture of Birds, 1831, p. 269.

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THE COMMON KING-FISHER.——*Alcedo Ispida.*

This little bird, whose length is generally about seven inches, is a most expert fisher. It is very beautiful, but very greedy. The quantity of fish it will eat at one meal is quite surprising. This species of King-fisher is common in most parts of Europe, and is remarkable for its brilliant plumage, which gleams like metal, with blue and green, and for the quickness of its flight. Bishop Stanley, in his "Familiar History of Birds," gives such a lively account of its appearance and habits, that we cannot forbear quoting it.

"Most of our readers," says he, "may probably have seen it darting in the direction of a brook-course, like a flying emerald. We were once fortunate enough to watch one within a few yards for some time. It was on a calm sunny day: the bird was observed to settle on the post of a rail, projecting into a piece of water: a boat was gently impelled towards it in perfect silence: it seemed to take no notice, sitting motionless, as if it had been stuffed, and placed there for ornament. In an instant it darted off with so rapid a motion, that a green bright line from the post to a splash of water, where it had plunged, alone marked its course. In another instant it rose, and with as rapid a flight resumed its position on the post, having swallowed the little fish, whose bright scales we could just see glistening in the sun as the bird emerged from the water. There it rested motionless as before, till another plunge denoted the capture of another fish; and so on, till, after having captured four or five, it darted away, and was seen no more."

The King-fisher lays five or six eggs, in a little burrow which it chooses in the bank of a river, forming the nest chiefly of fish-bones and scales, cast up by it in an undigested state. The eggs are of a pinky white. The young, as soon as they are hatched, utter cries for food. They live for some time on their parents' skill in the art of fishing, but are not long in learning to fish for themselves, and get their own livelihood. The classical name by which the King-fisher was known is Halcyon. There was among the ancients a poetical notion, that birds of this kind "kept the waters calm and serene while they built and sat on their nests on the surface of the sea."* Hence the phrase "Halcyon days," which means *happy*, or *tranquil* days.

* Lemprière's Classical Dictionary, "Alcyone."

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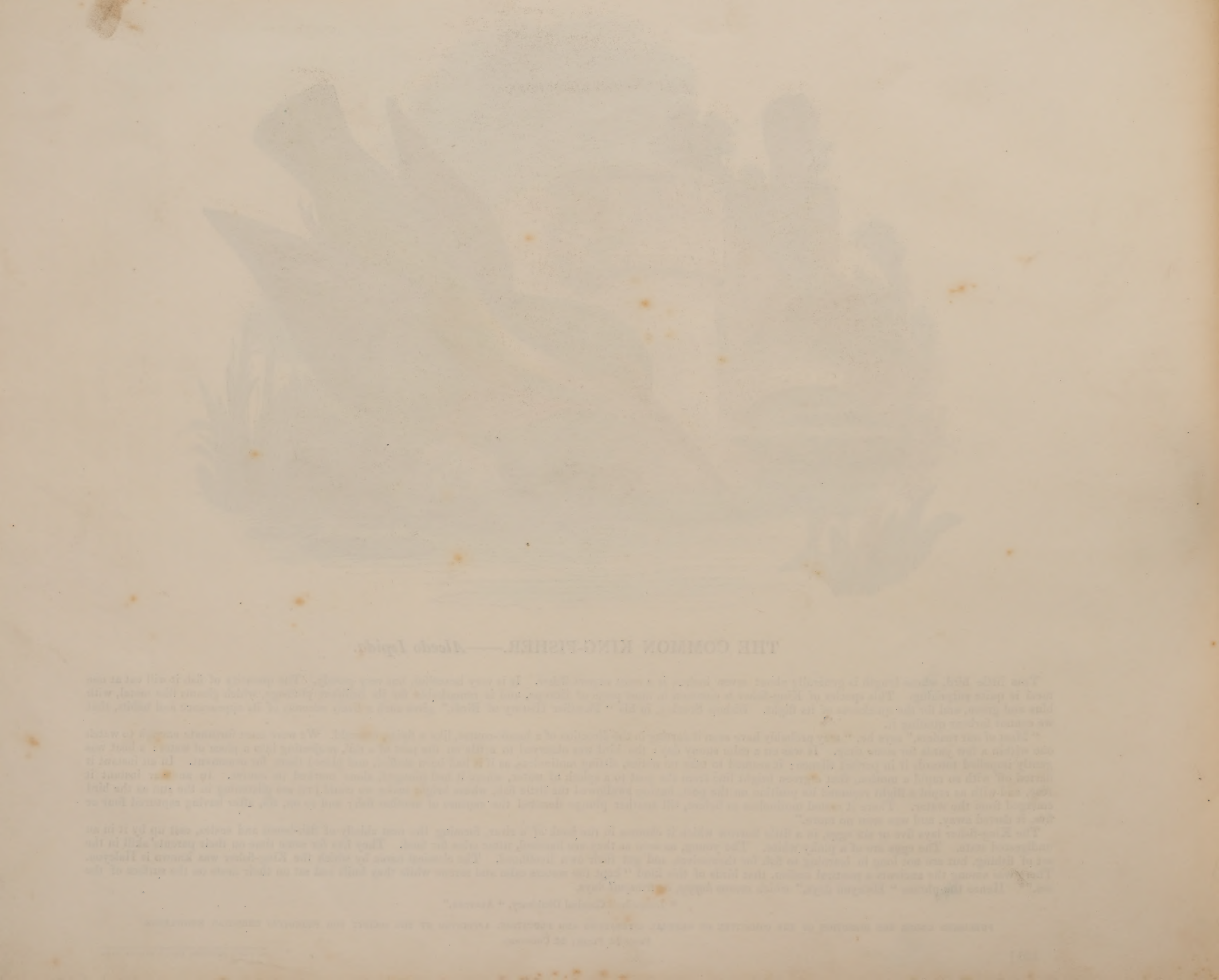

THE ALEXANDRINE PARRAKEET. *Palæornis Alexandri.*

India is the native country of this species of the large family of Parrots. It is called Alexandrine from Alexander the Great, whose conquests were spread over India, and who returned from that country, laden with the spoils of the East, and bringing, as it is thought, among his treasures specimens of that Parrakeet which now bears his name. The bird is still occasionally found in the Peninsula of India, but more commonly in the Island of Ceylon. The species is somewhat rare, and affords a good instance of the form and habits of Parrots in general. They are great climbers. Hence the feet are peculiarly fitted for grasping branch after branch of tall trees; in mounting or descending which they are greatly assisted by their bills. On these branches they find the chief articles of their food, fruit, including small nuts and berries, being liked by them better than anything else. In eating they often carry their food to their mouths by means of their feet, which thus serve the purpose of hands. Collected in large numbers, they chatter together, and are very noisy and mischievous; indeed, the farmers in the countries where these birds abound, look upon them with fear and dislike, in consequence of the havoc committed by them on the vegetation and fruits. In most of these things they remind us of the monkey, whose natural dwelling is for the most part in the same climate as that of this amusing bird.

The body of the Parrakeet is of a brilliant green, the bill of a bright ruby, and the neck half encircled by a rose-coloured collar. The usual length of the bird is from eighteen to twenty inches; the female is smaller; the colours of both male and female are much the same.

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THE COMMON PHEASANT.——*Phasianus Colchicus.*

The Pheasant derives its name from Phasis, a river rising in the mountains of Armenia, from the banks of which this beautiful bird is said to have been brought into Greece by the Argonauts about 1260 before the Christian era. It is a hardy bird, and has long been naturalized in this country. It is also found in Tartary, and some parts of China. Its food is of various kinds; Jerusalem artichokes, potatoes, buckwheat, peas, beans, barley, and wheat, as well as bulbous roots (as those of the tulip, the buttercup, &c.) for which it digs with its bill and feet. To this list must be added wild berries, sloes, haws, and insects of different sorts. The most splendid specimens of the Pheasant with which we are acquainted have been brought from the north of China. Among these may be mentioned *Reeves's Pheasant*, so called from John Reeves, Esq. who brought one from that country: the *Golden Pheasant*, whose rich and varied plumage is chiefly distinguished by a fine glowing yellow: the *Silver Pheasant*, a larger bird than the former, and as beautiful, though less gorgeous in its colours. These become tame in confinement, and may be seen moving about in their enclosures in Collections, with the ease and confidence of barn-door fowls. There are also the *Long-tailed Pheasant;* and the superb *Argus*, so called from its dark ringed eye-spots, in which it somewhat resembles the Peacock. The female Pheasant (as in the Gallinaceous tribe generally), is smaller than the male, and, from its dusky plumage, has a more sombre and homely appearance.

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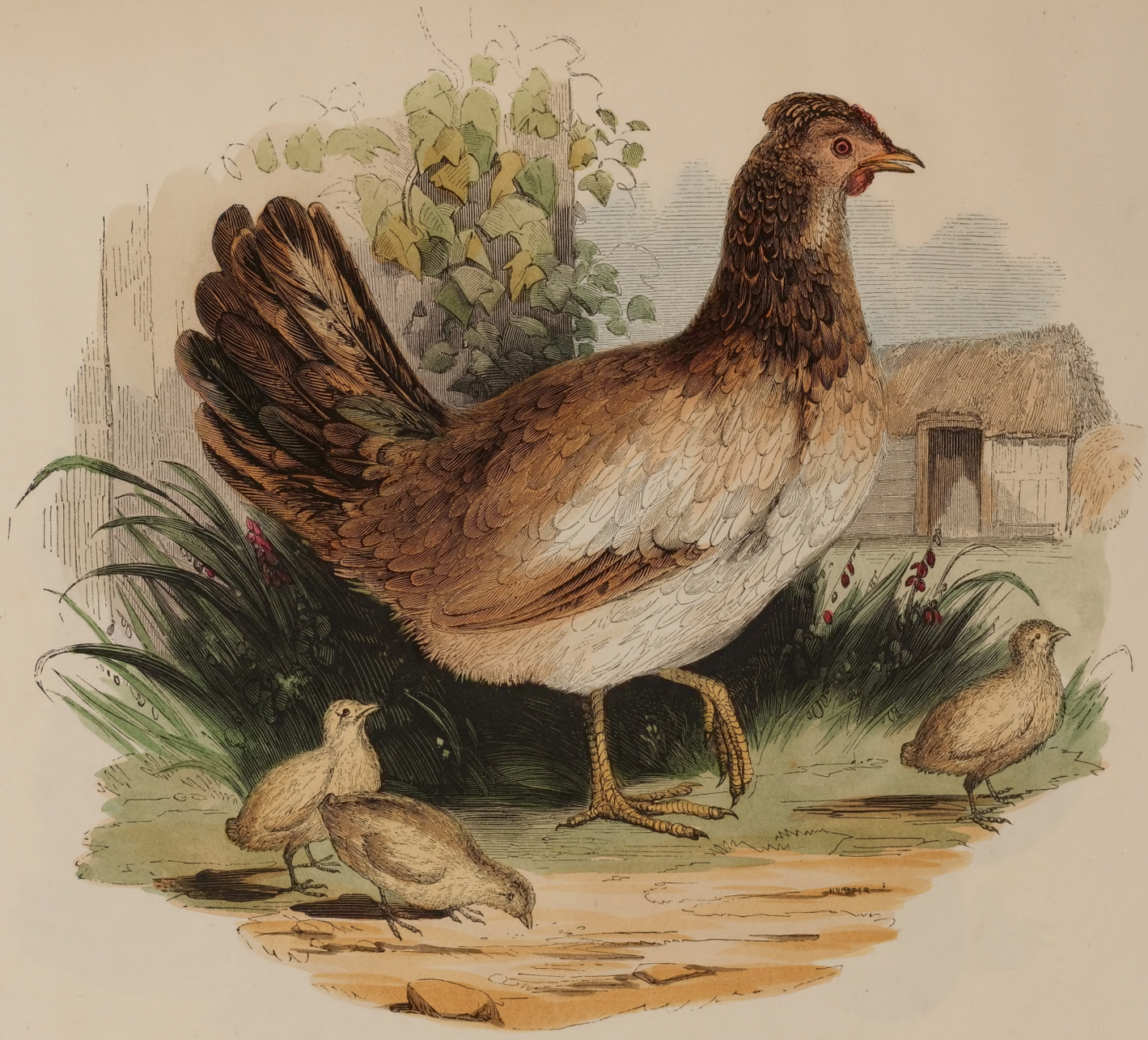

THE COMMON HEN.——*Gallus domesticus, (fem.)*

The order of birds, which is called *Gallinaceous*, is by far the most useful species to man. The barn-door fowl, the turkey, peacock, and guinea-fowl, the large race of pigeons, and the various birds, known generally as game, belong to this order; and when we consider them as affording us wholesome and agreeable food, or supplying feathers for the use of beds, and other purposes, the value of poultry must be acknowledged to be very great. The common fowl, which we constantly see in a tame state in our streets, and farm-yards, is a native of India. Many species are known, and it is difficult to determine the direct original of the fowl, with which we are so well acquainted. But it is, probably, a bird of Java.

The Hen makes her nest without any trouble, if left to herself. A hole scratched in the ground among a few bushes is the chief preparation which she makes for her eggs. While she sits, she carefully turns her eggs, and even removes them to different situations. When the chickens are hatched, she leads them forth to provide for themselves. Her maternal affection, as Gilbert White remarks in a fine passage of his work, seems to alter her very nature, arming her for the defence of her helpless brood on the slightest appearance of danger. The following interesting anecdote, told by Addison, of an instance of instinct in a Hen, will be acceptable to our readers:—"As I was walking this morning, I was wonderfully pleased to see the different workings of instinct in a Hen followed by a brood of ducks. The young upon the sight of a pond immediately ran into it; while the step-mother, with all imaginable anxiety, hovered about the borders of it, to call them out of an element that appeared to her so dangerous and destructive. As the different principle which acted in these different animals cannot be termed reason, so when we call it instinct, we mean something we have no knowledge of. To me, as I hinted in my last paper, it seems the immediate direction of Providence, and such an operation of the Supreme Being, as that which determines all the portions of matter to their proper centres."

Our Saviour alluded to the parental tenderness and care shown by this bird, when, in reproving the blindness of the Jews, and prophesying the destruction of Jerusalem, He said, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!"—Matt. xxiii. 37. Luke xiii. 34.

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THE BLACK GROUSE.——*Tetrao Tetrix.*

THERE are several sorts of the TETRAO, or GROUSE. They have round or forked tails, and feathered legs. Above the eye is a patch of red skin. The male Black Grouse, seen in the above cut, is much larger than the female, and generally weighs about four pounds. The colour is deep black, with a white band across each wing. Under the tail the feathers are white. The Black Grouse is a shy bird, and looked upon as a great prize by the sportsman. It is a native of the moorland and heath, the wild plain or mountain, the barren rock and thick pine-forest. Though most frequently found in Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Russia, Germany, and France, it is still met with in parts of the British isles, especially in the Highlands of Scotland: it is not uncommon in Dorsetshire, Devonshire, and North Wales. Wherever there are wild heath and pine-woods, this fine bird finds a home. The shoots of heath and fir, various moorland berries, the buds of the birch and alder, and different kinds of grain, are the food of the Black Grouse. The young feed chiefly upon insects.

In the month of May, the female makes a nest under the shelter of furze or brushwood, and lays from six to ten eggs, of a yellowish grey hue spotted with light brown. The young birds, male and female, have at first the same dress—that of the mother; but in the autumn the young males take their own dark plumage of black, shot with deep blue. The feathers of the female are chiefly of an orange brown, speckled, barred with black; the tail slightly forked, brown, spotted with black. Linnæus classed in the same family with the TETRAO, Partridges and Quails; but modern writers on birds have noticed, in these, points of distinction from the Grouse, and have given them the general description of PERDICINÆ.

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THE GREAT BUSTARD.——*Otis Tarda.*

This is a British bird, and was once common in England, where it is now seldom seen, though it is sometimes met with in Norfolk, and on Salisbury Plain, as well as other wide and open plains or commons. It is believed, and with good reason, that the old stock of this bird is extinct in this country, and that the occurrence of one of the species from time to time is only dependent upon an accidental visit. The above figure is that of the male bird, which is generally three times as large as the female, and is nearly four feet high. When full grown, it weighs between twenty and thirty pounds; and as its flesh is much valued as food, the capture of a Bustard is esteemed a great prize. We are told that it was formerly hunted by dogs. This seems strange; as, when once on the wing, it can fly with amazing speed. It, however, runs very swiftly, as the ostrich does, with the aid of its outspread wings. It feeds on grain, grass, tender leaves, and sprouts of turnips, insects, worms, frogs, &c. It is a very shy and cautious bird, most difficult of approach in its wild state, and when in confinement, fierce and distrustful towards strangers. In the male, a tuft of long wiry feathers grows from the lower part of each cheek; the fore part of the neck is without feathers. This fine bird is common on the plains of Greece, and in some parts of Russia, and is occasionally found in France.

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THE GOLDEN PLOVER.——*Charadrius Pluvialis.*

This is a bird of passage, and is met with in Europe, Western Asia, and parts of North Africa. Considerable numbers of the species called the Grey Plover were found to the south-west of Fury Point, by Captain Sir John Ross, in his expedition to the Polar Sea. The length of the Golden Plover is about ten inches and a half. On arriving in this country from colder regions, it lives on heaths and moors, and lays its eggs in a hollow in the ground. In a nest formed of a few small twigs and stems of grass, four Plover's eggs may sometimes be found after a careful search. Great care is taken of the nest by the parent birds, especially the female. She will practise many clever arts to defend her little dwelling, and guard her helpless young ones against the approaches of the sportsman and the dog. The eggs are of a dull pale yellow, with a tinge of green, blotched and streaked with dark brown. They are generally boiled hard, and eaten cold, and have a fine rich taste. The Plover, when cooked as a woodcock, is quite equal to that bird. The summer plumage of this elegant bird, as represented above, differs greatly from its winter dress. As winter comes on, the black of the neck and under parts gradually fades: the sides of the head, neck and chest become of an ashy brown; the throat and under parts white.

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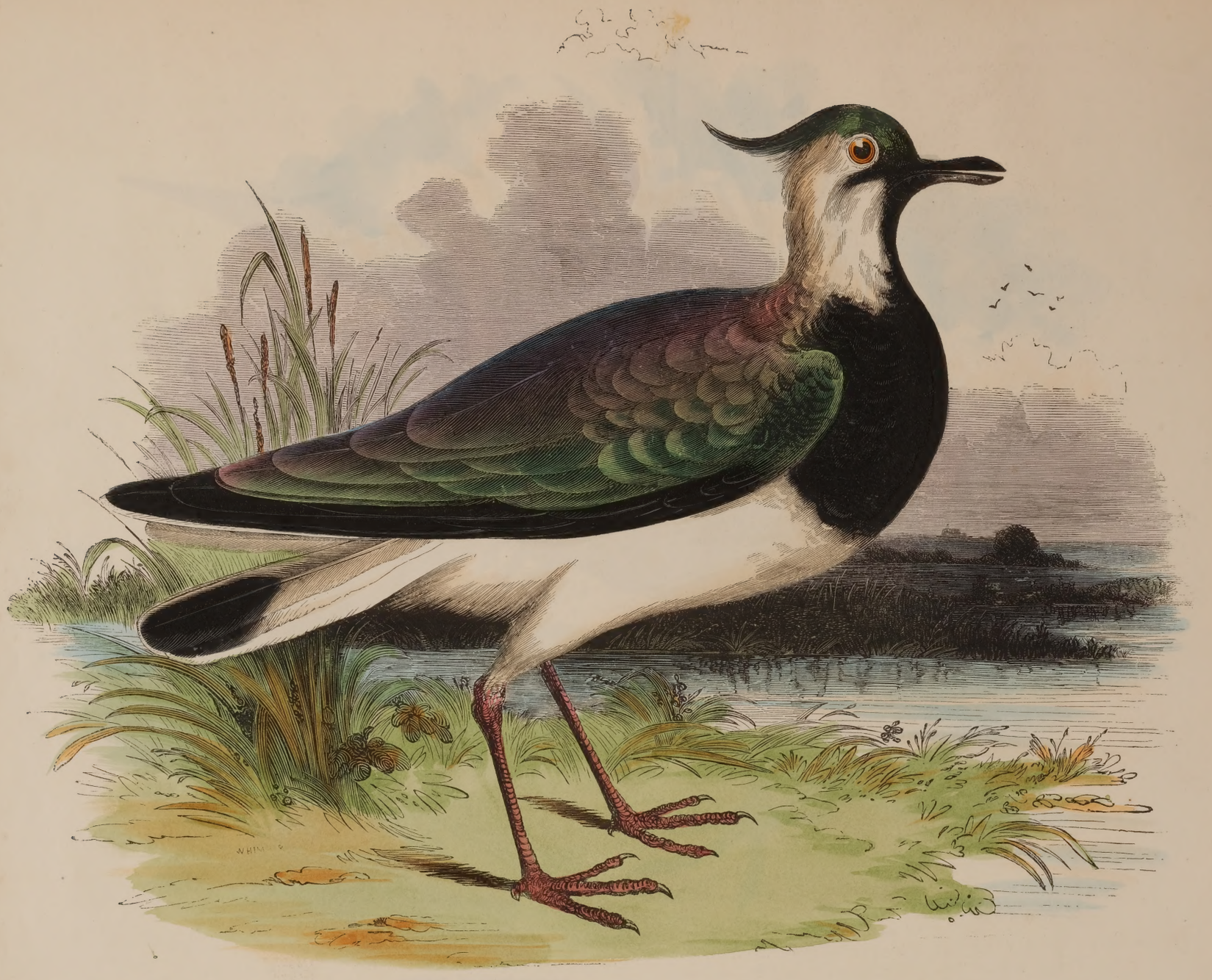

THE LAPWING.——*Vanellus Cristatus.*

This bird, which is about the size of a common pigeon, is found in most parts of Europe, as far northward as Iceland. In the winter it is met with in Persia and Egypt. Its food consists chiefly of worms, in search of which flocks of Lapwings may sometimes be seen, covering the low marshy grounds, and drawing their prey from its hole. When the bird meets with one of the little rolls of earth which are thrown out by the worm, it first gently removes the mould from the mouth of the hole ; and then having struck the ground at the side with its foot, patiently awaits the result. The worm, as if startled by the shaking of the earth near its habitation, issues from its retreat, and is instantly seized and devoured, or is carried to the younger birds. In the evening the Lapwing adopts another mode of obtaining its food. It then runs along the grass or mould, and feels with its feet for the worms which the dampness of the atmosphere has drawn from the earth.

These birds make a great noise with their wings in flying, and are sometimes called Peewits from their peculiar cry.

The female lays two eggs on the dry ground, near some marsh, upon a little bed, which she forms of dry grass. These eggs are olive-coloured, and spotted with black. She displays that fond attachment to her young ones which is so well described by Gilbert White, as astonishing him by its effects. "This affection," he says, "sublimes the passions, quickens the invention, and sharpens the sagacity of the brute creation." Thus, we are told that the Lapwing does not wait the arrival of her enemies at the nest, but boldly pushes out to meet them. When she has approached them as near as she dare venture, she rises from the ground, as if just startled from hatching, though, probably, she is a hundred yards from the nest. To complete the deception, she becomes more clamorous as she retires from the nest. If very near it, she appears altogether unconcerned, and her cries cease in proportion as her fears increase. When approached by dogs, she flies heavily at a little distance before them, as if wounded, but never moves towards the spot where her young ones are housed. The dogs pursue in expectation every moment of seizing her, and by these means they miss her offspring ; for the ingenious and affectionate parent, having drawn off her pursuers to a proper distance, exerts her power of flight, and leaves them to stare with astonishment at her escape. The Lapwing is sometimes tamed, and then becomes familiar and confiding.

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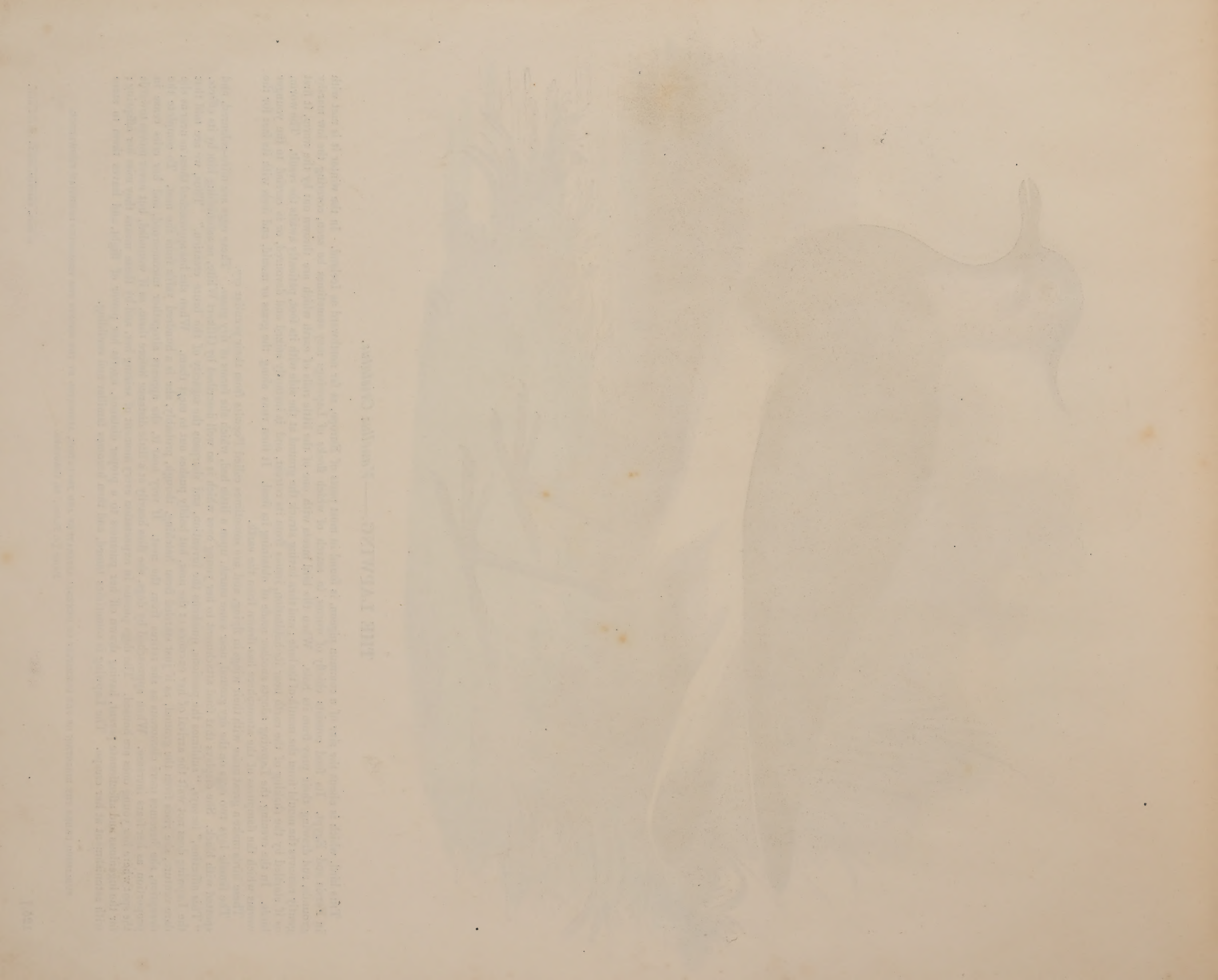

THE BITTERN.——*Botaurus stellaris.*

This is a bird of the Heron kind,—a family to which the Storks also belong. Birds of this kind frequent the sides of rivers, lakes, or marshes, and feed on fish, reptiles, water-plants, and sometimes field mice. The Bittern is a timid solitary bird, concealing itself in the sedge, and among reeds and bulrushes during the day, and is known by its dismal hollow note, which is heard particularly in the evening. The deep and bellowing tones which it utters, have obtained for it in some places the name of the Bull-of-the-bog, and the Mire-drum; while a writer on Natural History says of its peculiar sound, that it "might be supposed to proceed from some formidable animal, resident at the bottom of deep waters. The bird, however, that utters this terrific noise, which may be heard at the distance of a mile, is not so large as the Heron." Strange notions have prevailed respecting the manner in which the note of the Bittern is produced; some have fancied, that it thrusts its bill into the water or mud, and blowing with all its might, swells its note above the natural pitch. Thomson has fallen into this error, or rather, perhaps, taken a poet's license to adopt a vulgar error as his own opinion, in order to illustrate his subject.

"So that scarce
The Bittern knows his time, with bill engulphed
To shake the sounding marsh."

The plumage of this bird is of a reddish yellow, beautifully spotted and barred with black. Bishop Stanley, in his History of Birds, mentions a very extraordinary *light* said to be visible in the breast of the American Bittern: He says, "Most, if not all the birds of the Heron genus, especially our common Heron, have on their breasts a considerable space void of feathers, filled up by tufts of down, to which adheres a sort of clammy oily substance. It is not therefore unlikely that this oily matter may, either by smoothing the water, or in some other way, enable the bird to attract, or (when attracted) to strike its prey with greater certainty."

The Bittern is found in each of the four quarters of the globe. It was much prized in this country in the days of falconry, and was an object for hawks to fly at. When wounded, the Bittern defends itself fiercely and vigorously, and generally aims at the eye of its enemy. This bird is referred to, in its sad and lonely character, by the prophet Isaiah, in his declarations of God's purposes against Babylon, and of the desolation of his enemies: "I will also make it a possession for the Bittern, and pools of water." "The cormorant and the Bittern shall possess it: the owl also and the raven shall dwell in it." Isa. xiv. 23; xxxiv. 11. See also Zeph. ii. 14.

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THE GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL.——*Larus Marinus.*

The family of Gulls is very numerous—" a class," says Bishop Stanley, " which the sailor is sure to find wherever he goes, whether under the burning sun of the tropical regions, or the frozen icebergs of the arctic circle, and always bearing the same noisy, restless character."

Among the various species of Gulls are the Burgomaster, and the Laughing Gull; the former so called from its superior power and command over other birds of the same kind; the latter from its constant noise, which seldom ceases for more than one hour out of the twenty-four. But of all this tribe, differing one from the other in certain particulars, the Great Black-backed Gull is the most frequently seen, and is, perhaps, the finest bird. It is found along the coast of the States of North America, and is common in the Orkneys and Hebrides. It is constantly met with on our own shores. With its wide flapping pinions, sailing quietly and confidently along, it attracts the notice of all who visit the coast. Settling suddenly down on the surface of the sea, it rises and falls with the billows without an effort, and appears unmoved in the midst of heavy gales. Gulls float upon the water, but do not dive. Pouncing down, they skim their food from the surface, or pick it up from the muddy beach, at the ebb of the tide. They are coarse feeders, and sometimes eat almost to suffocation. Fish, dead or alive, mollusks, carrion, things that other creatures have left untouched, are welcome to the appetite of these birds, which have been well styled the scavengers of the sea. The plumage is deep, full, and soft. The gull builds a nest of rushes and grass. The eggs are three or four in number, of an olive green, blotched with black.

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THE BLIND-WORM, OR SLOW-WORM.——*Anguis fragilis.*

THERE is a very common, but mistaken opinion, that the blind-worm is venomous. The fact is, that there are no poison-fangs in its jaws, and that the teeth are so small as scarcely to leave any mark on the finger by the bite. The name by which this creature is known would lead some persons to suppose it blind; whereas it has eyes, small indeed, but very bright and quick. "The general colour of the blind-worm," says Mr. Bell, "is a brownish grey, with a silvery glance." A black line extends down the back. The length of this animal is ten, twelve, or fourteen inches. It feeds upon the little white slugs common in gardens, and on earth-worms and insects. It cannot swallow rats or mice, or full-sized frogs and toads, its jaws having a narrower gape than that of the common snake, viper, and others of the family of true serpents. Mr. G. Daniel, in Mr. Bennett's edition of White's Selborne, describes the habits of a blind-worm, which he kept alive for nine weeks. It ate white slugs, and drank sparingly of milk, raising its head while drinking. It avoided water, and was very different, in this respect, from some snakes which he had, which coiled themselves in a pan containing water, and appeared to delight in it. The blind-worm cast its skin while in Mr. Daniel's possession; the skin came off in separate pieces, the largest of which was two inches in length.

This creature, which is also known by the name of the slow-worm, is capable of enduring a much colder climate than most other reptiles, even of our own country. Mr. Bell, in his "History of British Reptiles," says, "It is found in Russia, Poland, Denmark, Sweden, and Scotland, as well as throughout the most temperate parts of Europe, and as far south as the south of France and Italy; but it has not, I believe, been seen in any part of Africa. It makes its appearance also at an earlier season than any other of our scaled reptiles. It retires in the autumn under decayed wood or leaves, or into soft dry soil, where it is covered with heath or brushwood, and penetrates to a considerable depth in such situations by means of its smooth rounded muzzle and even polished body." The same agreeable writer informs us of its being so timid that, on being laid hold of or pursued, it contracts itself so forcibly as to become perfectly stiff; and it is then so fragile as to be easily broken in two either by a blow or an attempt to bend it: hence it acquired the title *fragilis*, which was given to it by Linnæus.

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THE TURBOT.——*Rhombus maximus.*

This is one of the best, as well as one of the largest of the flat-fishes, and is found on the coasts of Durham and Yorkshire, as well as on other coasts of our island. But the various sandbanks between the line of our Eastern shore and the coast of Holland are considered the best places for taking this valuable fish. At the beginning of the season, (about the end of March, or the beginning of April,) the trawl net is used, which being drawn along the banks, brings up various kinds of flat fish, as soles, plaice, and turbot; but when the warm weather has driven the Turbot into deeper water, the men take to their small lines, each of which has several hooks baited with small fish. The smelt, and a bright-coloured eel-like fish, called the gore-bill, are favourite bait for the Turbot. The Dutch fishermen have been very successful in securing supplies of Turbot for the London market. It is stated by Mr. Yarrell, that about one-fourth of the whole quantity of this fish brought to London is furnished by Dutch fishermen, who pay a duty of £6 a boat, each boat bringing from 100 to 150 Turbot. The number of Turbot brought from various parts to Billingsgate market, within twelve months, up to a late period, he states to have been 87,958.

The form and appearance of the Turbot are well known. Its average weight is from five to ten pounds, though it is often found to weigh fifteen or twenty pounds and more. The upper side of the body is dark-coloured and spotted, the under surface, smooth and white. The flesh on the dark-coloured side has been said to be the best meat. No creature has, perhaps, been more celebrated as an article of luxury for the table than this. A Roman Satirist has given an anecdote of an enormous Turbot, which was brought to Rome, and presented to the Emperor Domitian. So large was the fish, that for the boiling of it no pot of sufficient size could be found. In this distress, the emperor calls together his Senate, who sit in council upon the subject.

" The Emperor now th' important question put,
' How say ye, Fathers, *shall the fish be cut?*'
' O far be that disgrace!' Montanus cries;
' No! let a pot be form'd of amplest size,
Within whose slender sides the fish, dread sire,
May spread his vast circumference entire!' "

Gifford's Juvenal, *Sat.* iv.

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THE CUTTLE-FISH.——*Sepia Officinalis.*

The Cuttle-fish is a species of the *Cephalopoda;* this being a Greek term, compounded of two words, signifying *head,* and *feet.* A cephalopod has a large head, from which proceed eight or ten long legs. These legs are furnished, along the whole of their inner surface, with suckers, which may be compared to cupping-glasses, and by means of which the creature holds its prey. The body is of a jelly-like substance, and is surrounded by a mantle in the form of a purse. In order to cover its retreat from its enemies in the sea, the Cuttle-fish has a remarkable power of spouting out a fluid as black as ink from an opening at the back of its head. This fluid mixes with the water. One of our writers on natural history compares an obscure writer, who hides himself under his own ink, to this animal. The ink when dried forms a valuable substance for painting, and is called *sepia.* Some persons have supposed that the Indian ink of China is composed of this material; but there is no certainty in this. Dr. Buckland, Dean of Westminster, in his *Bridgewater Treatise,* mentions as a very curious fact respecting the cuttle-fish, that among the petrified remains of the ancient world was found the ink contained within the bodies of extinct species of cephalopods. He says, "The preservation of this substance is established beyond the possibility of a doubt by the recent discoveries of numerous specimens in the lias of Lyme Regis, in which the ink-bags are preserved in a fossil state, still distended as when they formed parts of the organization of living bodies: so completely are the characters and qualities of this ink retained in these specimens." He adds that, in 1826, he submitted some of the fossil ink to Sir F. Chantrey, requesting him to try its power as paint, and that a drawing was accordingly prepared with a powdered portion of it. A celebrated painter, to whom the drawing was shown, and who had heard nothing of its origin, at once pronounced it to be tinted with sepia of excellent quality, and begged to be informed by what colourman it had been prepared. The sepia used in drawing is from the ink-bag of an Oriental species of cuttle-fish.

There is another kind of cuttle-fish, the *Octopus vulgaris,* called *Octopus* from its having eight legs. It is sometimes called the "Poulpe," and by the sailors the "rock-squid." In the centre of the head, between its two large eyes, is a kind of beak, like that of a parrot. This is used in devouring such victims as the creature gets within its grasp. It creeps along the bottom of the sea, or among the sea-weed on the rocks, and feeds on fish of various kinds, including crabs, lobsters, and other shell-fish. Its courage and cunning are said to be equal to its rapacity, as it can hold its prey with the firmness of a vice; but when alarmed, can at will disengage itself in an instant, and swim away. It seems to have been one of these which Mr. Beale met with, while searching for shells upon the rocks of the Bonin Islands. It was creeping on its eight legs, when he tried in vain to stop it, by pressing his foot strongly on one of these limbs. Finding it slip from under him, he seized it firmly in his clenched hand, and gave it a jerk with all his force; on which the enraged creature suddenly sprung upon his bare arm, and tried to bite with its beak. Nor would it let go its hold, till the captain of the vessel, who was also seeking for shells, came to Mr. Beale's assistance, and was obliged to cut off his enemy piecemeal. The expanded limbs of this creature measured across about four feet; its body was the size of a man's fist. We read of some enormous specimens of cuttle-fish in hot climates; the limbs, if we may believe the account, being as large as those of a man.

The *Sepia Officinalis,* represented in the above cut, is about a foot long. Its skin is smooth, whitish, and spotted with brown. It is very common on the English coasts; and the horny layer enclosed in its body is frequently found on the sands. It is a well-known substance, and is much employed in the manufacture of tooth-powder.

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THE COMMON SCORPION.——*Scorpio Afer.*

We ought to be very thankful that the Scorpion is not a native of this land. The very look of the creature in a quiet state is dreadful; but what must it be in hot countries, when on being suddenly disturbed among dry crumbling stones, or in some unnoticed corner of a house, it is seen running quickly along, with its jointed tail curved over its back and its enormous crab-like claws extended to seize its prey! At the end of the tail is a hooked poisonous sting. Wounds inflicted with this weapon are terrible even to man, but seldom prove fatal. Mr. Kirby states that the only means of saving the lives of our soldiers who were stung by scorpions in Egypt, was amputation. The whole body is covered with a hard shelly crust.

Among the many passages in Scripture which refer to the cruelty and treachery of the Scorpion, may be mentioned Deut. viii. 15; 1 Kings xii. 11; Ezek. ii. 6; Luke x. 10; Rev. ix. 5, 10.

THE LOCUST.——*Acrydium.*

When we see a print of a mere insect, like the Locust, small and harmless in itself, we can scarcely imagine at first the dreadful effects it is able to produce. But the vast swarms and countless numbers of these creatures collected together shadow the sun, eat up every green herb, cause a famine of food, and leave the fields as if a fire had passed over them. "The land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness."* These awful visitants, so successful in destroying the fruits of human industry, were, we know, sent by the power of the Almighty as one of the plagues of Egypt, when Pharaoh refused to let the people of Israel go.† But though the Locust is often the scourge of those countries in which it abounds, the inhabitants sometimes find it useful as an article of food. Locusts and grasshoppers were allowed in the old Jewish law to be eaten.‡

* Joel ii. 3. See the description in this chapter, ver. 3—11. † Exod. x. 13, 14. Psalm cv. 34, 35.
‡ Lev. xi. 22.

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